preparedness is far too inadequate and wanting, as compared to our neighbours;

(b) if so, the reasons for showing laxity in proper defence planning and to bring our defence preparedness comparable to neighbouring countries; and

(c) whether the Standing Committee of the Parliament, in its latest report, has also criticised Government for this?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) No, Sir.

(b) Does not arise.

(c) The Standing Committee on Defence in its Second Report, 1998, made a reference to the defence preparedness in the context of according a high priority to the defence sector and privision of adequate budgetary/allocations in 1998-99. The recommendation was conveyed to the Ministry of Finance in 1998 for its consideration.

Accident rate in IAF

1571. SHRI RAJNATH SINGH SURYA': Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that accident rate in IAF is going high;

(b) whether any study was commissioned by Air Headquarters in this regard;

(c) if so, what are its main findings; and

(d) whether Government propose to act on its finding?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (d) There has been decline in the accident rate in the IAF. As per the available statistics, the accident rate in respect of Category-I accident has come down from 1.01 in 1995-96 to 0.71 in 1998-99, (till February' 1999). No study has been commissioned by Air Hqrs in this regard in the last three years. However, a High Powered Committee on Fighter Aircraft Accidents (COFAA) was constituted under the Chairmanship of Scientific Adviser to Raksha Mantri to analyse the causes of the accidents which submitted its report in September, 1997. It has made certain recommendations to minimise accident rate. Implementation of these recommendations would involve changes in organisational structure, procedures, training, design, technology etc. Necessary instructions have been issued to the agencies/ Departments concerned to take suitable action in terms of the recommendations of the Committee.

Cases for denial of promotions in three services

1572. SHRI VAYALAR RAVI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to refer to answer to Unstarred Question 164 given in the Rajya Sabha on the 24th February, 1999 and state whether Government made study into
this problem of increasing number of cases, field by officers of three services against denial
of promotions during the last three years, for redressal of the grievances?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): Information regarding all court cases on service matters filed by the Services personnel and pending in various courts during the last 3 years was given in reply to the Unstarred Q. No. 164. Court cases on denial of promotion form only one part of the figures referred to therein.

No formal study has been conducted in this regard.

Action against Gujarat Government

1573. SHRIMATI CHANDRA KALA PANDEY:
SHRI NILOTPAL BASU:

Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government are aware of the report "Home Secretary faces a barrage of queries", appearing in the Statesman dated February 4, 1999;

(b) if so, whether the Home Secretary stated that everything short of dismissing the Gujarat Government, had been done; and

(c) if so, the action taken against the Gujarat Government so far and the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI L.K. ADVANI): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During his visit to the USA, the Home Secretary was asked a number of questions on the reported attacks on Christians and their